(vii) hike in the admissible cost of construction under Indira Awas Yojna and accelerating the pace of work under the scheme;

(viii) Coverage of all development blocks under the Employment Assurance Scheme within one year;

(ix) sanction of new Sugar factories along with enhancement of capacity of certain Sugar factories;

(x) completion of the ongoing Mau-Shahganj railway line;

(xi) provision of safe drinking water; and

(xii) opening of primary schools, primary health services in unserved habitations and provision of roads for unconnected villages.

(b) to (d) Many of the announcements relate to acceleration/augmentation of the ongoing schemes such as Indira Awas Yojna and Accelerated Rural Water Supply Project. Under the Indira Awas Yojna, for example, existing provisions amount to Rs. 470 crores and another Rs. 150 crores is proposed to be provided in consultation with the Planning Commission and Ministry of Rural Affairs and Employment. A similar amount additionally has been proposed for provision of safe drinking water. Further, additional Central assistance of Rs. 28 crores would be given for the Primary Health Centres. Unconnected villages will be provided with all weather roads through additional funds from the Employment Assurance Scheme over and above the provision of 188 crores already made in the State budget. The Central assistance has also been assured for some other schemes/projects. The additional Central assistance will be made available through appropriations and overall savings.

Drug Pricing Policy

*536. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been invited to a news-item appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated April, 12, 1996 captioned 'Drug Pricing Policy in shambles';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the norms by which the administrative ministry are fixing the prices of drugs;

(d) whether the Ministry are following the recommendations of the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices in this regard;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(f) the corrective measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY O CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news item alleges that recommendations BICP with reference to prices of bulk drugs an formulations are not being accepted by the Departmer and that prices are being fixed on extraneou considerations and are also being delayed.

(c) The prices are fixed under the provisions DPCO'95 and in accordance with the establishe procedures of costing.

(d) and (e) Normally the recommendations of BIC are followed. Delays in notifying the prices s recommended are sometimes caused if the matter is sub judice or interpretation of policy is involved.

(f) Corrective measures taken in this regard incluc expeditious resolution of interpretation of policy matte as and when they arise.

[Translation]

Purchase of Concrete Sleepers

*537. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: Will th Minister of RAILWAYS pleased to state:

(a) the number of concrete sleepers purchased b the Railways during the last three years, year-wise ar company-wise;

(b) whether the Government have directed sleepe production units to stop their production;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time involved between placing the orders f purchase of concrete sleepers and their supply along wi the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILA PASWAN): (a) The details are as per statement.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Railway normally places order for manufactu and supply of concrete sleepers on various existir sleeper manufacturing units before completion of th previous order. The firm normally starts manufacture ar supply of concrete sleeper immediately after placeme of the order as infrastructure for manufacture and supp of additional quantity is already available with the facto The time involved between placing of order and supp depends upon the capacity of each factory.